

SOUTH DOUGLAS / WEST JUNEAU AREA PLAN
Steering Committee Meeting
Zoom Webinar Format
Tuesday, March 29, 2022
MINUTES

Steering Committee Members Present:

Carole Bookless Rebecca Embler Liz Smith
 Matt Catterson Arnold Liebelt Linda Snow
 Frank Delaney Robert Sewell Joyce Vick
 Erik Pederson, Planning Commission Liaison (non-voting)
 Annette Smith, Docks & Harbors Liaison (non-voting)
 Peter Naoroz, Planning Director, Douglas Indian Association Liaison (non-voting)
 Kamal Lindoff, Property Manager, Douglas Indian Association (non-voting)

Staff Members Present:

Beth McKibben, CDD Senior Planner Scott Ciambor, CDD Planning Manager
 Jill Maclean, CDD Director Dan Bleidorn, CBJ Lands Manager
 Michele Elfers, Deputy Director, Parks & Recreation

I. Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 5:03p.m. by Vice-Chair Joyce Vick.

II. Approval of Minutes

a. March 15, 2022 Minutes, South Douglas / West Juneau Steering Committee Meeting

Approved by consensus.

III. Public Testimony on Agenda Items – 10 minutes - None

IV. Public Testimony on Non-Agenda Items – 10 minutes - None

V. Presentation from Parks and Recreation Deputy Director, Michele Elfers

Ms. Elfers introduced herself, she was pleased to have conversation and answer questions. Shared parcel viewer with all of the various land holdings Parks and Recreation manage (community parks, small parks which are often portions of subdivisions, cemetery lands, and greenbelts).

Ms. Elfers stated that she has been in department three years and there is always parcels that come up as managed by Parks and Rec that they didn't realize.

Bond passed last year for a couple of projects:

- Treadwell Ice Arena new roof: Re-bid in the fall, to be completed in the next year or two.
- Savviko Turf: Underground drainage for some of the fields put in and to plant outfield grass either next season or next year. It will be more multi-use to encourage more participation.
- Grant funding to re-do the Mt. Jumbo Trail: Re-locating that trail to Savviko to address parking and to join into the existing trail before getting to Treadwell ditch. This re-location will be good to have a trailhead with amenities. This will be terminus of the entire Treadwell Ditch trail. Expect to see more bikes once complete. Trail Mix to start next spring.
- Reconstruction of Savviko Park: Replace the lighting (rotten wood with standard metal poles, new fixtures). Low-level park lighting to be added, work on drainage fixes at shelters, add concrete walks/pads for entries to the beach and replace playground surfacing. Design this summer, bid, and construction next spring.

Ms. Elfers noted the parking lot at Savviko cannot be redesigned, even though it seems a little backwards. Movements for larger vans, busses would require curb changes, etc. which is too expensive.

It was noted that at the last meeting there was some discussion on harbor lighting. Comments included designing with light pollution in mind and pedestrian scale.

Ms. Elfers said a pole will be added near the parking lot entrance, bus stop where one is missing. The plan is to replace lighting currently there. A handful in the park will not be replaced. Two fixtures will be added to the with the fireplace shelter to help deter criminal activity. She asked the designer a few weeks ago to provide a light modeling plan. Parks and Recreation's intent is to not increase lighting. Streets have national standards and we'll meet those.

Ms. Vick asked about bathrooms being often closed. Docks and Harbors discussed an addition of restrooms/showers. Will they be using those already in place?

Ms. Elfers said the two bathroom facilities by playground are open in summer and closed in the winter because they are not heated. Restrooms on the other end are opened for special events. It is a cost issue to keep open; staffing, volume of use. She was asked if Parks & Recreation would consider adding a porta-potty in the winter because a lot of people see the restroom and become frustrated when they find it locked.

Ms. Vick asked if there has been any thought about more signage about Native community, flora/fauna, other points of interest for tourists and other interpretive signs?

Ms. Elfers said they are open to the idea, similar to other projects around town.

Ms. Vick said there has been some discussion of Parks & Recreation taking over the cemeteries, creating a connection with the park space.

Ms. Elfers noted she had not heard about the status of this proposal in about a year and half.

Ms. McKibben said that one thing mentioned last week on lighting design was shielding so the light is directed down.

Ms. Elfers said all lighting they install is directed down; it is a standard design to prevent off-site glare.

Ms. Vick asked about the timing of the work on the turf area and the Douglas 4th of July event.

Ms. Elfers said the schedule includes exclusion dates to work around big events. She thinks the project schedule calls for completion by the 4th of July.

Ms. Bookless asked about the Mt. Jumbo trail. Is the relocation of the trail to create less opposition to future development of 6th street?

Ms. Elfers said she is not sure and this may be a question for CDD.

Ms. McKibben asked about long term plans for the Jumbo gym.

Ms. Elfers said that Maintenance is there and they just started renting it out again post hunker down. She does not know what the long-term plans are for the facility. Lots of funding needed and it is not a high priority.

Ms. Embler enquired on the purpose of our Douglas Plan. What is the process of making area parks space or community garden space, etc.

Ms. Elfers said if the site is not currently Parks managed, perhaps going to Lands or initiating other inter-departmental discussion.

Ms. Embler said she does not have any specific locations in mind, but is wondering about process.

Ms. Smith asked if there are any plans for the extension of 1% sales tax for Parks and Recreation.

Ms. Elfers said there is nothing specific and she is not sure if any of that funding is intended for Parks and Recreation at this time.

Mr. Sewell asked if there are plans for expanding the ice rink to two sheets of ice.

Ms. Elfers said that there has not been active budgeting. Funding comes from Land Water Conservation grants.

Mr. Sewall noted that anything would be great to continue the ice rink as an anchor for Douglas. He would like to see the addition of a modest beverage service to add more community service and the addition of a second sheet of ice. He noted the facility is in high demand and the ice is in use very early in the morning and late into the night to accommodate all users.

Mr. Sewell noted the interface between Savviko Park, the ice rink, and the harbor has a great deal of disconnect. He mentioned abandoned vehicles, hurricane fences, and the lack of lighting, walkways, and pavement. Having the harbor, park, and ice rink look and function as a cohesive unit seems like a great opportunity.

Ms. Elfers agreed this is a missed opportunity. She clarified that for abandoned cars, CBJ can't always just remove. There is a process that has to be followed and they do track them.

Mr. Sewell noted Savviko Park is zoned D-18 and he believes it needs to be re-zoned to preclude future development. He asked what else can be done for more parks and recreation.

Ms. Elfers has been working with Juneau Commission on Aging. They are interested in senior exercise equipment; partnership. There are some opportunities like this to create more activities in the parks in addition to the large events and sports.

Mr. Sewell asked about snowmobiling from 5th up to Mt. Jumbo. Parking on 5th street isn't available. Is Parks and Recreation related to that part of recreation?

Ms. Elfers said the official parking is up near the Dan Moller trail head on Blueberry Hills. She thinks the access is a right-of-way. She is not sure if it is parks managed property and can check on it.

Mr. Sewell noted that green space for recreation is opportunity up the hill.

Mr. Pederson said the snow machine trail on 5th is in a right of way at least initially.

Ms. Smith said the Harbors Board has been working with someone on the removal of the abandoned vehicles in the parking lots. She asked Mr. Sewell to connect and provide information on the vehicles he is concerned with.

Ms. McKibben said that at the last steering committee meeting, Ms. Smith asked the committee about Mayflower Island. She wondered if Parks & Recreation has been part of that conversation.

Ms. Elfers said that some Parks & Recreation staff was part of a site visit and there had been a very general conversation.

Ms. Liz Smith said she thought that the follow up notes from Ms. Annette Smith say Coast Guard was going to keep Mayflower Island for now.

Ms. A. Smith said she does not know how long Coast Guard plans to keep it or what their plans are. She will try and find out.

Ms. Bookless asked if there was opportunity for another public forum. She said it sounds like a small group of people know the necessary information.

Mr. Sewell said that Mayflower Island is a form of connection, asset, world-class, hooked to docks and harbors. He loves the Coast Guard, but does not want to see them have a stake on the island. Douglas Island Indian Association stakeholders have interest which seems like it fits directly into this planning process.

Ms. Snow said the Coast Guard uses it as a communication lab with eight staff. We need to keep in mind that it currently belongs to the federal government.

Mr. Pederson said that even a government to government transfer would be a multi-year process and require listing in federal registry and extensive public outreach.

VI. Review of Visioning Work and Table of Contents

Ms. McKibben provided a five minute overview to review work already done, including the Major Plan Elements. It was noted that vehicular transportation is missing from Connected Community.

Items for group to think about for next meetings

- Other groups of unique characters.
- Organic sense of community/social interactions.
 - Robert: Not planned, organic, naturally get to know people over time, walking around vs. ginned up events.
- Ms. Snow - Incentivize new construction LED.
 - New construction of older buildings: Just kind of thinking about weatherization type programs.
 - Under prosperous community: Could differentiate for economic development for locals and businesses bringing customers into Douglas.
- Ms. Bookless - with special education hat on, should make LEED generic, instead of specific. Also, LEED is not the end all, be all.
- Ms. McKibben notes she is hearing more active programming for parks on top of big events already in place.

VII. Committee Comment

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

Next Meeting Dates:

- Wednesday, April 13, 2022, 5:00 p.m. via ZOOM
- Tuesday, May 3, 2022, 5:00 p.m. via ZOOM